

Description

Title: Internet-based clearinghouse service for freight services

1. This invention generally describes an internet-based freight advertising system, which increases the efficiency of delivery, due to the price transparency for all parties and due to the opportunity to fill up empty transport vehicles on their return trips.
2. The claim considers the fact that many transportation conveyances (e.g. trucks, ships, airlines and trains) return empty to their departure points. A coordinating platform can connect through the worldwide internet all parties requiring or offering freight service. This patent covers the application of such a system.
3. On the one hand, parties, who are looking for transportation from a certain location to a certain destination can use this program to enter all freight data. The program generates a list of contacts with all prospective business associates by comparing a request with all offers entered from freight forwarders or other users. On the other hand, freight forwarders, railways or other companies, who offer such a freight service, can look for a freight opportunity in the system in the same way.
4. The system is comparable to advertisements in a newspaper. The difference to this is that the clearinghouse takes advantage of the internet by comparing and combining given data and by forwarding the results directly to the advertiser.
5. The application will be displayed by the example as follows:
 - 5.1 User A enters the system through an URL (e.g. <http://freight-service.xx>). User A needs to be registered by entering all identification information, including its contact information (e.g. e-mail, mailing address, etc.).
 - 5.2 User A receives an e-mail with a password confirmation.
 - 5.3 User A enters the program by entering its user ID and password.
 - 5.4 User A selects, if it is seeking or offering freight services.
 - 5.5 User A selects the geographical departure point of the freight (e.g. from: North America/ USA/ New York).
 - 5.6 User A selects the destination of the good (e.g. to: Europe/ Italy/ Bergamo).
 - 5.7 User A selects the time and date of delivery (e.g. on: 10/24/2007) or
 - 5.8 User A selects a time frame for delivery (e.g. between 10/23/2007 and 10/26/2007).
 - 5.9 User A may mark the type of goods to be transported (e.g. break bulk)
 - 5.10 In order to avoid too restrictive research information, which might give only a few results, the user may enter an acceptable alternative route expressed in terms of chargeable mileage. Otherwise another user B, that is offering nearly the same freight service from New York to Milan (next to Bergamo) would not be informed of the search demand of user A. For example, user A may enter a maximum acceptable detour of 50 miles in order to cover other departure and destination points around New York and Bergamo.
 - 5.11 User A will click the >search< button.
 - 5.12 The program will generate a results list, where all other users appear that entered information that matches the search criteria of user A.
 - 5.13 User A is able to contact one of the parties on the results list (e.g. by clicking on the e-mail address contained directly, or indirectly, by a link in this information).
 - 5.14 Users A and B (matching users) may exchange further information (e.g. by phone)

5.15 If there is no matching user, user A may have the opportunity to click an icon indicating: "inform me of a future match" and will receive counterpart contact addresses (e.g. via e-mail) about all future matching users.

6. Example

Please select (☒):

☐ I am searching for freight services

☒ I am offering freight services

From continent: ☒ North America

to continent: ☒ Europe

From country: ☒ USA

to country: ☒ Italy

From state: ☒ New York

to state: ☒ ---

From city: ☒ New York

to city: ☒ Bergamo

on: ☒ Date

OR

between: ☒ Date

and: ☒ 10/24/2007

Type of goods (please choose):

☒ All types

I accept an alternative route not to exceed ☒ 75 additional miles.

SEARCH >>

Table of results (sort by prices):

☐ Please inform me of a future match by mail.

Request 325 Request date: 20/02/2007
between: 10/23/2007 and 10/30/2007
Type of good: bulk material

From: New York To: Milan (+33 miles)
please contact: mrexample@milano.xx
Quotation: USD 1,000

Request 436 Request date: 19/04/2007
between: 10/20/2007 and 10/30/2007
Type of good: break bulk

From: New York To: Brescia (+33 miles)
please contact: mrforwarder@example.xx
Quotation: USD 1,150

Request 10423 Request date: